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ABSTRACT

This document presents one in a series of twenty-three case studies derived from in-depth interviews using a sampling of former participants in the Mountain-Plains program, a residential, family-based education program developed to improve the economic potential and lifestyle of selected student families in a six-state area. Each case study contains the following information about a specific student family: biographical data; participation in the educational and community programs; home, income, placement, and employment data; stated problems and/or satisfactions; summaries of the participants' personal and social development; individual ratings of the program; scripts of personal interviews; interviewer comments; and individual test scores and self-assessments. This document presents specific findings on Toby and Margie Ginn, whose family consisted of two young children and Margie's teenage sister. The follow-up study reports that the Ginns successfully completed the program and were able to overcome several major personal/family crises experienced while attending Mountain-Plains. (Names in these studies have been changed.) Two other documents are included in the series: a report which examines work and income variables for the group (ED 110 610) and a report which summarizes group findings on personal and social development (CE 014 681). Specific documentation for the instruments utilized in the study are included in both of these related documents. (BM)

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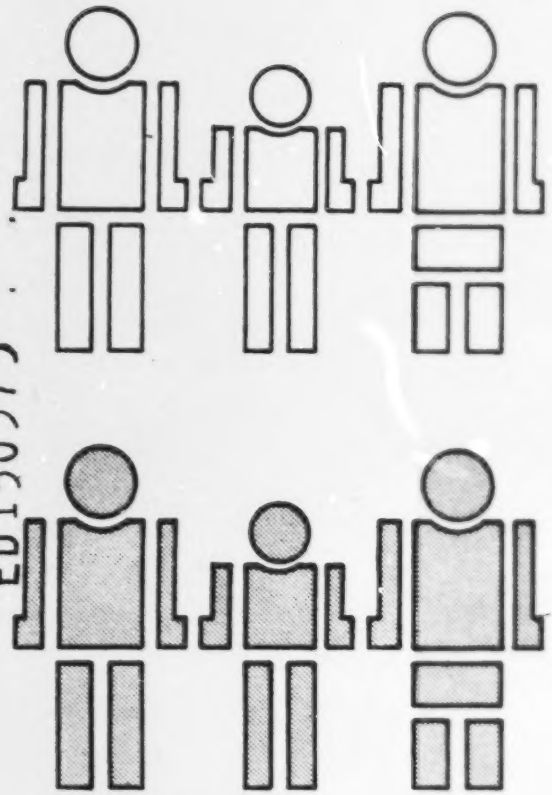

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CASE STUDY REPORT # 4

Toby & Margie Ginn

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MOUNTAIN PLAINS EDUCATION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM INC.

CASE STUDY REPORT

TOBY AND MARGIE GINN

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May, 1975

A Product of Research Services Division
David A. Coyle, Director

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PREFACE

Reports in this series are derived from in depth interviews using a stratified random sample of former Mountain-Plains students. Interviews were conducted from November, 1974 through January, 1975 by Mountain-Plains professional research staff. Case Study Report 1 examines Work and Income variables for the group. Case Study Reports 2 through 24 include specific findings on each family included in the sampling. Case Study Report 25 summarizes group findings on personal and social development. A summary of the research design for the Case Study Reports is documented in: Coyle, David A.; Conrad, Rowan W.; and Myers, Douglas D. In Depth Case Study of Exited Families: A Summary of the Research Design for Phase 1 Preliminary Effects Study. Glasgow, Montana: Mountain-Plains Press, 1974. Specific documentation for the instruments utilized in the study are included in either Case Study Report 1 or Case Study Report 25. All names in these studies have been changed.

Michael C. Fenenbock
Series Editor

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CASE STUDY REPORT

TOBY AND MARGIE GINN

BACKGROUND

Prior to entering Mountain-Plains, Toby and Margie Ginn were living with their children, Jackie 2 and Corey 6 months, in a small town in South Dakota. The home was an aging, sturdy, comfortable five room house rented for $65 per month. Toby had completed the eleventh grade before dropping out of school, completed six months of MDTA training and had been successfully employed as a mechanic. Toby's dropout was precipitated by being "k cked out of school" for engaging in "socially undesirable" behavior. He says he "didn't do anything," that he was just, "along" but that they all got "the ax." He then went to live with relatives, changed schools, and ultimately dropped out. Margie had completed high school, was a sales "manager" for Montgomery Ward (Margie says the job was not nearly so grand as the title--that she was a sales girl) and had completed some formal "saleslady" training. Between them, the Ginns were earning about $7,000 per year.

The Ginns were accepted into the Mountain-Plains program by the state office in November of 1972 and an entry date scheduled. Because of stable employment histories and income level, the final on center review rejected the Ginns as being over-qualified for Mountain-Plains. However, by this time the Ginns had made arrangements to leave, including Margie resigning her job. Because the Ginns had been given a commitment by the state staff (although such a commitment exceeded their authority) and because the Ginns made a convincing case about being "deadended" in South Dakota (Toby: "I suppose I could

stay on the farm or if I worked at it real hard I could have my own mechanical business in twenty years, but I don't really like mechanics or farming, and I don't like being trapped here,") the decision was reversed and the Ginns entered Mountain-Plains in December of 1972. Immediately prior to entry Toby had been working the family farm following his father's death.

HOME AND INCOME

Toby and Margie are now in their early 20's. They live with their children and Margies's 15 year old sister, Terri, in a new clean three bedroom apartment in a nice neighborhood in Missoula, Montana. Their income has risen 184%, a savings account is increasing, and debts are down to an accumulated $500, mostly car payments. Mrs. Ginn is small, attractive and outgoing. Mr. Ginn is short, calm and well groomed. Their children are friendly, well behaved, well cared for, and obviously secure. The teenager is a "typical" teenage girl, much interested in phones, friends, and music. There is apparent good rapport between her and the adults. The Ginn's were observed to be strict but fair, and Terri to be helpful with home care tasks and the children without having to be asked or reminded.

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

The Ginn family experienced 3 recorded major personal/family difficulties while attending Mountain-Plains: (1) Terri came to live with the Ginns while attending Mountain-Plains. A series of "typical" difficulties arose and the Ginns were unable to cope with Terri. Having entered before the establishment of a regular Counseling program, the Ginns were not involved in Counseling, but sought out assistance and resolved the matter; (2) Mr. Ginn was on a deer

hunting/drinking outing "with the boys" when a cow was shot. This eventuated in prosecution for rustling; and (3) the Ginns took their own car on job interviews against Mountain-Plains procedures, even after a special appeal was denied. They also stayed with friends instead of in a motel and spent the motel money to take friends out to steak dinner the last night as a "thank you". Mountain-Plains filed but later dropped fraud charges against the family.

All incidents have been resolved. The harmonious integration of Terri into the family has been reported above. Toby reports he finally learned not to "go along" and is presently on an 18 month deferred sentence "parole" for the "rustling" charge. The Ginns are not bitter toward Mountain-Plains for filing the fraud charge because, they say, they brought the thing upon themselves by violating the policy and taking their car on the trip. They are bitter toward one Mountain-Plains administrator who they say lied to and about them, but are favorable to both the staff and administration generally.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

The Ginns have little involvement with the community. They attribute this to Toby's odd work shifts (3 am to 12 pm) and the fact that Margie is working. Current involvement is limited to regular church attendance, and doing their "coop time" in the church nursery. The Ginns voted (for the first time) in the last election.

SATISFACTIONS

Toby reports the things giving him the most satisfaction in life are hunting

and his family. Margie says husband, children, job and friends give her satisfaction "pretty much in that order". Toby is dissatisfied with his job--he wants more challenge and more money. Margie wants a house instead of an apartment and a part time (rather than full time) job, but cannot locate one. Both want to attend college and report they will not be really satisfied until they do. Margie is also dissatisfied with the "hassle" of caring for family as well as working and feels she could resolve this with a part time job. Toby is somewhat dissatisfied with restrictions stemming from the fact that since Margie works, she often will not get a babysitter and go out and do 1:1 things as she feels guilty about leaving the children with a babysitter. Margie reports that making mistakes at work is the thing that gets her down most (although she is a perfectionist and seldom makes mistakes). Toby says "Nothing really gets me down--I'm pretty easy going."

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Both Ginns rate current life success 2 steps (on a 0--9 scale) above that experienced previous to Mounain-Plains and are optimistic about their next five years, rating expected success at 9. Both rate very favorably with norms on both the Powerlessness and Anomie scales. Self-concept scores on the TSCS are favorable with only one very low score for each spouse. Mrs. Ginn rates low on acceptance. Her low acceptance (or more appropriately her very high personal self expectations which are near perfectionistic) also emerge in her conversation as self-deprecating statements. For example, even when talking about a strength she will say things like, "But I could/should do better." This creates considerable underlying tension in Margie. Toby rates low

on social self. Although he deals well with people at work and on a one to one level, he reports being uncomfortable in group social situations. For example, he was unhappy about attending his wife's office Christmas Party, where they were to go on the night subsequent to the case study interview, but was willing to do so as a "duty" and as a recognition of his wife's outgoing social nature. Total TSCS score is in the range of persons found in previous studies to be stably employed (versus the lower scores recorded by those with employment problems.) (See Table 2, See Figure 4.)

Both Toby and Margie feel that they have considerable power to direct their lives. Current plans include more education (college) and keeping alert for opportunities. Both feel they cope with everyday problems well, however, Toby feels he could do better in dealing with children (although he was observed to be the most consistent parent). The Ginns report they are both surprised and disappointed with their income. They are making more money, but because of inflation can purchase few items they want. The Ginns major disappointment is an inability to save enough for a down payment for a house (rather than an apartment). However, the Ginns say they get better value for their money as a result of Mountain-Plains Consumer Education. Still, their ultimate dreams (college and their own home) seem as distant as ever.

The Ginns report they have had mostly good breaks in life. First among these they list Mountain-Plains. Others include finding a good babysitter, getting a job quickly (the Ginns picked relocation by geography rather than employment opportunity) and never having had to go for a long period without a job. As for bad breaks they list only two--both related to Mountain-Plains--the

hunting accident and subsequent rustling charge, and the interview trip misunderstanding that resulted in the fraud charge.

At Mountain-Plains, the Ginns bowled, but not in a league. Mr. Ginn played softball and occasionally went to the Family Center. Mr. Ginn reported softball gave him a self-confidence boost as he found that everyone else was as "bad" at it as he was. As noted, current community involvement is limited to church and voting. However, the Ginns are actively considering foster parent program participation and actively desire more community activity when time and circumstances allow (when Toby works a regular shift and Margie finds a part time job).

FEMALE INTERVIEW

Margie reports being happy with herself physically "except that I always wanted to be taller than 4' 10"". She is confident in her ability to do home care tasks although there is some time pressure. She gets things done, but sometimes it is "a real hassle timewise" since she is working. She reports that her husband helps with housework and children and that he has always been good about this (he was observed so doing during the interview). Her only non-family activities are her job and a daily lunch with the girls. Her husband does not encourage separate activities feeling that he has enough competition for her time from the job and the children. She feels satisfaction with her family and appreciated by her husband. Margie reports that she does things which focus exclusively on family, but does not feel that in so doing she neglects herself, rather, Margie says, she fulfills herself through this. She

took an occupational preparation at Mountain-Plains because she wanted to work, and would do so again. She says she reaches out, takes initiatives and has always been outgoing, but "before Mountain-Plains we were at a dead end in the middle of nowhere with no opportunities to grab." She says she likes herself and would choose herself for a friend because she is nice, easy to talk to, fun, understanding and optimistic. Her final comment was, "I'm O.K!" (A personal statement--she never heard of the book).

She reports that Toby talks over job and job problems, and that she knows what he does on the job. The Ginns make decisions together on major things. Groceries and personal items are decided by the person with time to shop (groceries) or the person who needs the personal item (clothes, etc.). Margie reports they talk over child problems and dreams for the children, that they both discipline the children, but that Toby is better at it and more consistent (this was observed to be so during the interview), that her guilt about working gives her a tendency to spoil the children (her personal needs to work are at a variance with her Catholic religious belief about women and children and the conflict has not been fully resolved).

Margie reports having gained considerable confidence overall since Mountain-Plains--she now believes she can do things. She attributes this to surmounting difficulties at Mountain-Plains with some Counseling assistance (teenage sister, rustling charge, interview trip problem) and with Work Experience. Through this she feels she gained both personal and skill confidence. Margie reports a big change in her husband, "he is more of a person--more of an individual.

He is more decisive and not as shy." (Less of the "go along" tendency mentioned earlier that tended to get him in trouble.)

Margie comments that problems facing them now are less serious than those before Mountain-Plains, that she and Toby are more satisfied with life, and that all she really wants now is (1) to be able to work only part time and (2) to save enough for a house. (This was observed as conflict--the less she works, the longer it will take to get money for a house.)

WORK SATISFACTION

Toby is currently in charge of "mix and loading for bake" at a major bakery. He chose a relocation site by locality rather than for a job opportunity in his training area, and then proceeded to seek employment. Unable to find employment in his area of training (Radio and TV repair), he took the first available job with reasonable pay he found.

Toby reports his work as so-so, his supervision as good, and his co-workers as very good. He has had 4 promotions with raises in 6 months, and while not dissatisfied (this is the most he has ever made), he would like to make more money. Conditions (physical) are in disfavor--"It's hot in summer and cold in winter, and I don't like working on a night shift." Toby wants a job that would use more of his ability. JDI scores show him to be less satisfied than most workers with the work, at the norm on supervision and more pleased than most with his pay, co-workers, and promotions. Toby has exhausted possible promotions at the bakery so while he feels very good about past

promotions, he has no prospect for future advancement (the next higher job is supervisor and the current supervisor is several years from retirement). This data confirms his self report assessment of his employment. (See Figure 1.)

Toby's supervisor rates him highly on all MSS variables (above the 75th percentile on all scales). His highest ratings (85th and 90th percentile respectively) were on performance and personal adjustment. The overall rating was at the 85th percentile. Toby also rated above the original norm on Patchen's Job Motivation scale, and below the norm on Pearlin's Work Alienation scale. In short Toby appears to be a cooperative, productive, motivated, and essentially an ideal employee. He reports feeling badly when he makes a mistake in the mix, and has to waste a quarter ton of product, and feeling best when all goes well, and he can see a good product as a result of his efforts. (See Figures 1 & 3.)

Margie reports satisfaction with her work and with her co-workers. Her supervisor has a drinking problem and when under the influence or hung over is short tempered, otherwise her supervision is reported good. She has no complaints about the salary, but would like to make more money. She has had one transer/promotion with accompanying raise since starting work last summer. Her JDI scores indicate normal satisfaction with the work itself, above normal satisfaction with promotions, and co-workers and subnormal satisfaction with pay and supervision. She does not like housework (JDI work for housework at 8th percentile versus employed women's job ratings). This is consistent with her self report. Margie's job motivation rates above that of Patchen's norm sample, and her alienation from work considerable below

Pearlin's norms. MSS scores are high (75th percentile or better) on all variables except work which is at the 35th percentile. Margie reports feeling best when she finishes a big job, and worst when she gets "chewed out" for something that is not her fault. High skill use, interesting business conducted by the office, and the chance to learn something about the communications industry are listed as the main attractions of the job. (See Figure 2.)

RATING THE MOUNTAIN-PLAINS PROGRAM

The Ginns both rate Mountain-Plains as a very positive influence and as the best break of their lives. Both say they would return, even knowing what they now know about Mountain-Plains and the "hassles" that would result. All program facets were listed as of some or much use (as opposed to of little or no use) by both both Margie and Toby except Margie found Community Development and Career Guidance of little use. Margie listed job training and English as the most useful parts of the program and Career Guidance as the least useful part. Toby listed Math and Recreation as the most useful parts of the program, and Career Guidance as the least useful. (See Figure 5.)

Toby rated his job skill as adequate as regards the curriculum covered, but as dysfunctional in that he has no chance to use it. Margie rated her job skill as adequate. Toby suggested that they get a new instructor for his area as the instructor could teach the curriculum, but could not fix an actual radio or TV that was in disrepair (Mountain-Plains has since replaced the instructor). Toby complained that Mountain-Plains totally changed the curriculum three

times while he was in the program causing him to start over three times. "Now I know three curriculums, but I never had experience working on actual radios and TVs." He also noted that Radio/TV did not even have a cable to hook a TV up to to check if it worked (lack of equipment).

Margie said Business and Office needed more instructor attention, and that more "hands on" experience would have been helpful to practice her skills. Both Toby and Margie rated English and Math as adequate to their jobs, but Toby wishes he had taken more in light of future plans and dreams (better jobs and college). Toby says knowing what he now does, he would change job training to Plumbing and Heating. Margie would change, but not among preparation areas offered at Mountain-Plains. She has an interest in more professional positions, but is not sure exactly what.

Both Margie and Toby credited Career Guidance as assisting them with self confidence. Toby said Counseling was of help to him in this area as well. Margie declared Work Experience to be the part of Career Guidance that helped her whereas Toby credited World of Work activities (job seeking, interviewing, employer expectations, etc.). Toby said Career Guidance helped with self knowledge through testing as well. (It should be noted that the Career Guidance program the Ginns experienced was "first generation" and quite different from the current program. Likewise no regular Counseling program had been developed, and the Ginns saw a counselor only when they sought one out for specific assistance.)

The Ginns suggested that the initial Career Guidance Program be shortened (it was 5 weeks long). Their contact with Counseling was positive, but limited. Both remarked they wished they had had additional Counseling and particularly wished that they could have participated in a counseling group since several friends who came in later told them they "got a lot out of it." The Ginns also wished that they had been contacted by a Counselor earlier--they were in a program for over 2 months before they even met a counselor or knew one was assigned to them.

The Ginns report no change in illness patterns or heightened feeling of confidence in dealing with health problems, although they were positively disposed towards the health class. They report no real problems with their children, although Margie wishes she had more time to spend with them. Consumer Education was rated as valuable. The Ginns agree they get more value for their money now and feel more confident in handling financial matters. They use a budget and have medical and term life insurance through their employers. They are not now (nor have they ever been) on welfare.

Current (versus retrospective pre-program) ratings find Toby's perceiving himself as: more self confident, with greater self knowledge and competence, being more industrious, and more courteous. Margie rates herself as now more punctual, self confident, and ambitious than prior to Mountain-Plains. She also feels more competent, industrious, and accurate in executing tasks.

INTERVIEWER COMMENTS

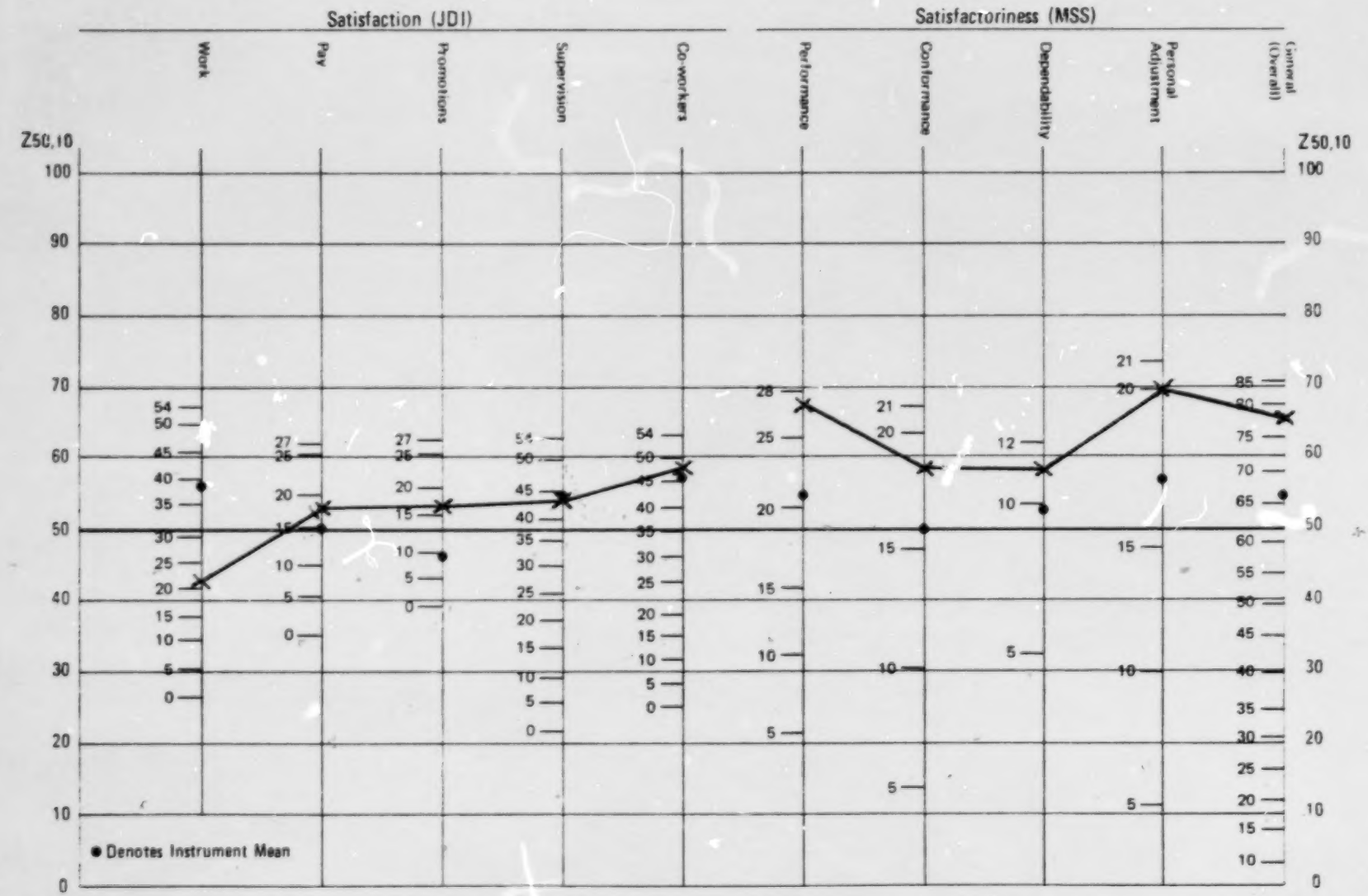
The Ginns are a competent, warm, ambitious couple. They are very positive

towards Mountain-Plains. The only problems of consequence they may have to deal with stem from Margie's ambition. A perfectionist, Margie is seldom satisfied (low self acceptance and high need for achievement). Toby is more easy going. Conflicts center on her desire for a job, a new home, and an internalized feeling that she should be "home with the kids." This guilt causes her to refuse a babysitter to go out evenings as often as her husband would like. While not critical, things would be more harmonious if the Ginns had had a chance to face these questions at Mountain-Plains (e.g.; in group counseling). In this vein had Toby been given a chance to develop his self confidence further, he might not have "gone along"with the boys and ended up "stuck" with a rustling charge.) Margie definitely needs a chance to work out her personal needs as they relate to her introjected religious values.

Toby's current desire to change career areas, and Marie's lack of ideas as to what she might pursue in college, confirms that Career Guidance was inadequate at the time they experienced it, and deserves the low rating given. The criticism of instructional areas (more hands on and more instructor time) are typical among students interviewed in the case studies. Also typical is the positive attitude towards Mountain-Plains, even among non-completers--and or those who were "kicked out" of Mountain-Plains. Therefore, the suggestion for more instructor attention and "hands on" time (versus paper curriculum)would appear to be legitimate rather than a mere complaint and in an operational mode, might be valuable. From Mr. Ginn's comments, it is clear that Mountain-Plains instructors should be fully competent to assist students, not only with paper curriculum, but in actual hands on situations, no matter what the mix of paper curriculum to hands on time.

Figure 1

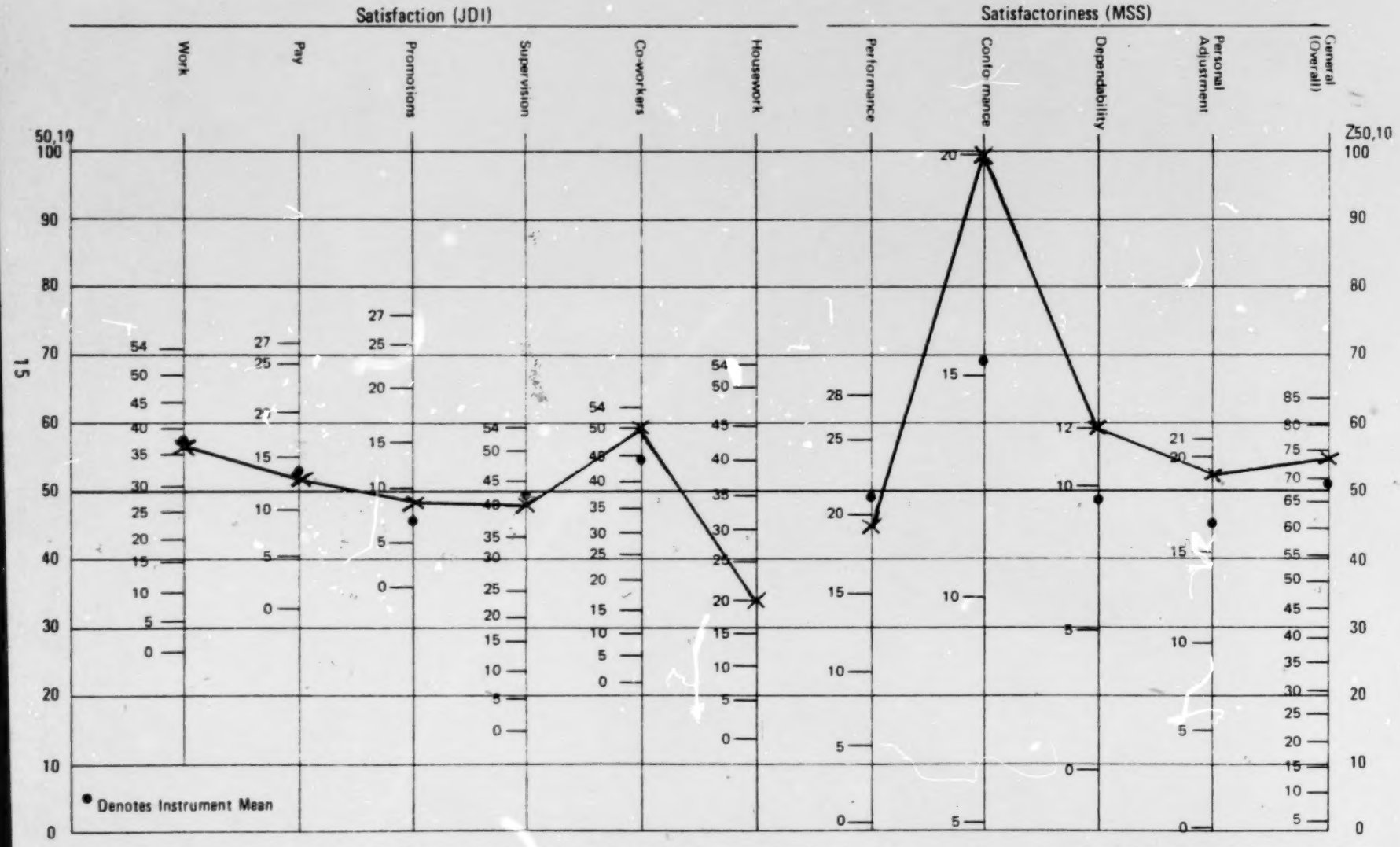
SATISFACTION AND SATISFACTORINESS – MALE



Note: Profile based on entering student scores.

Figure 2

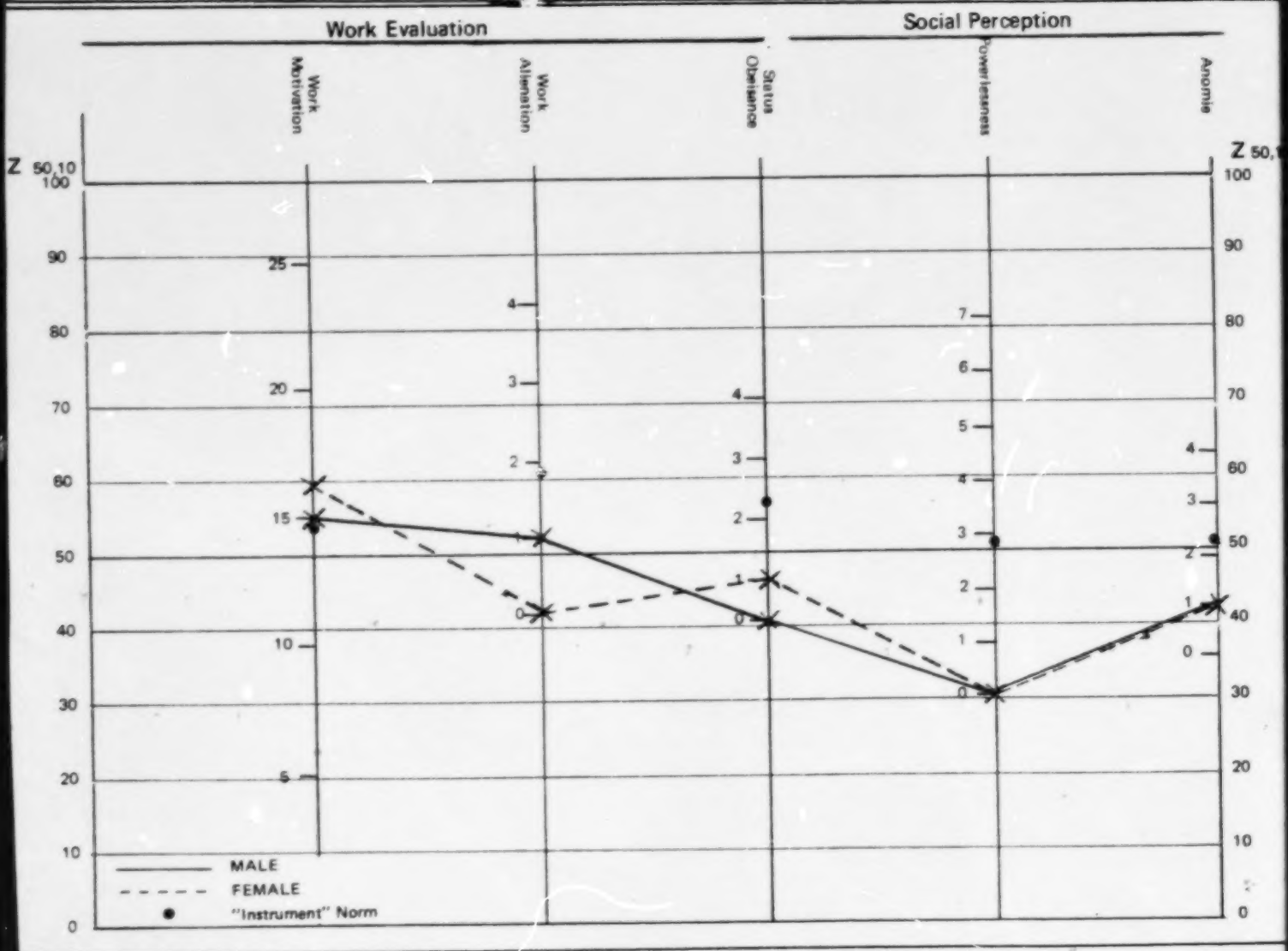
SATISFACTION AND SATISFACTORINESS – FEMALE



Note: Profile based on entering student norms except "Housework" which is based on instrument norm for employment.

Figure 3

MOTIVATION AND ALIENATION

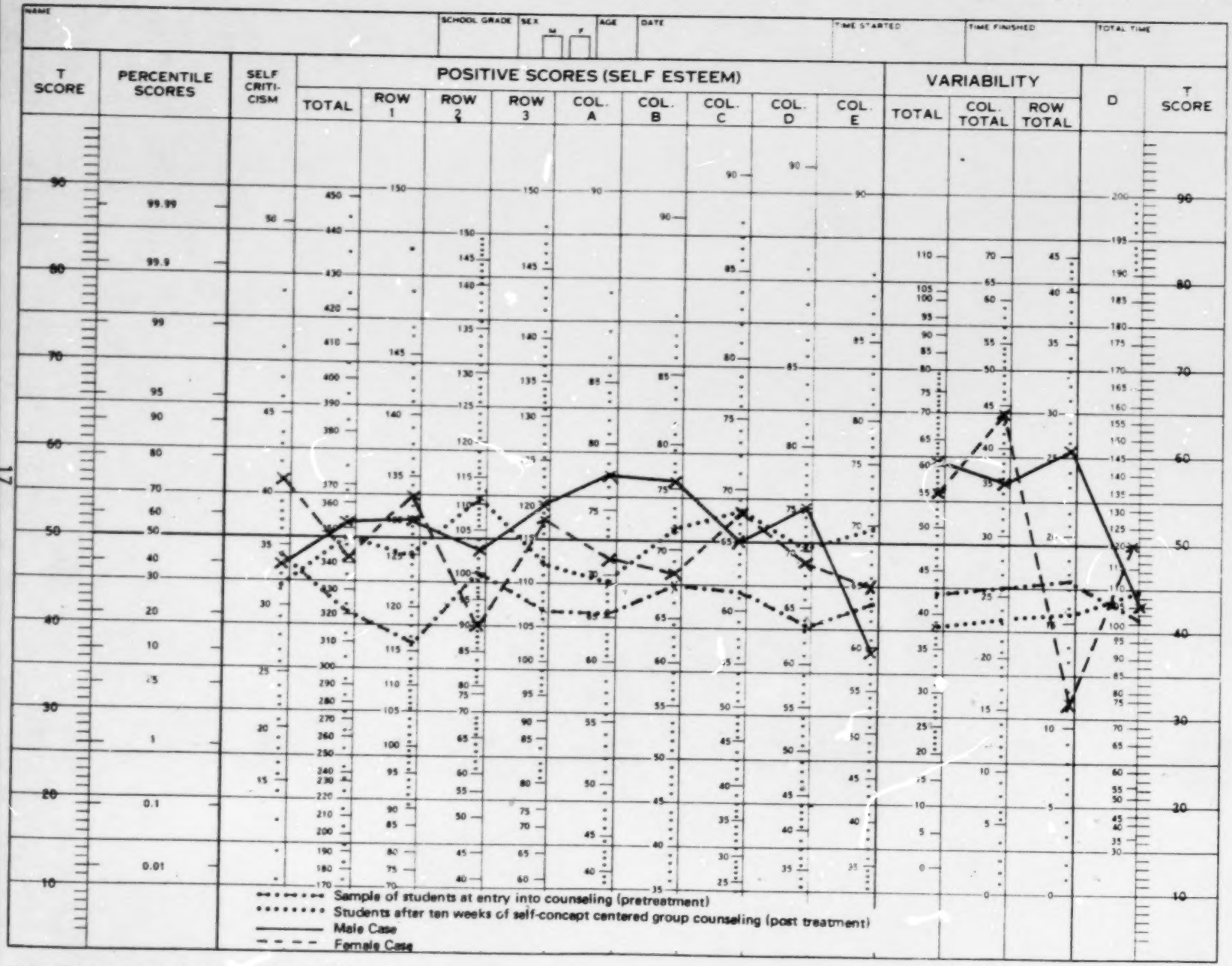


Note: Profile derived from entering student data.

Tennessee Self Concept Scale - Figure 4

PROFILE SHEET

Counseling Form



Note: This is the standard profile sheet for the TSCS.

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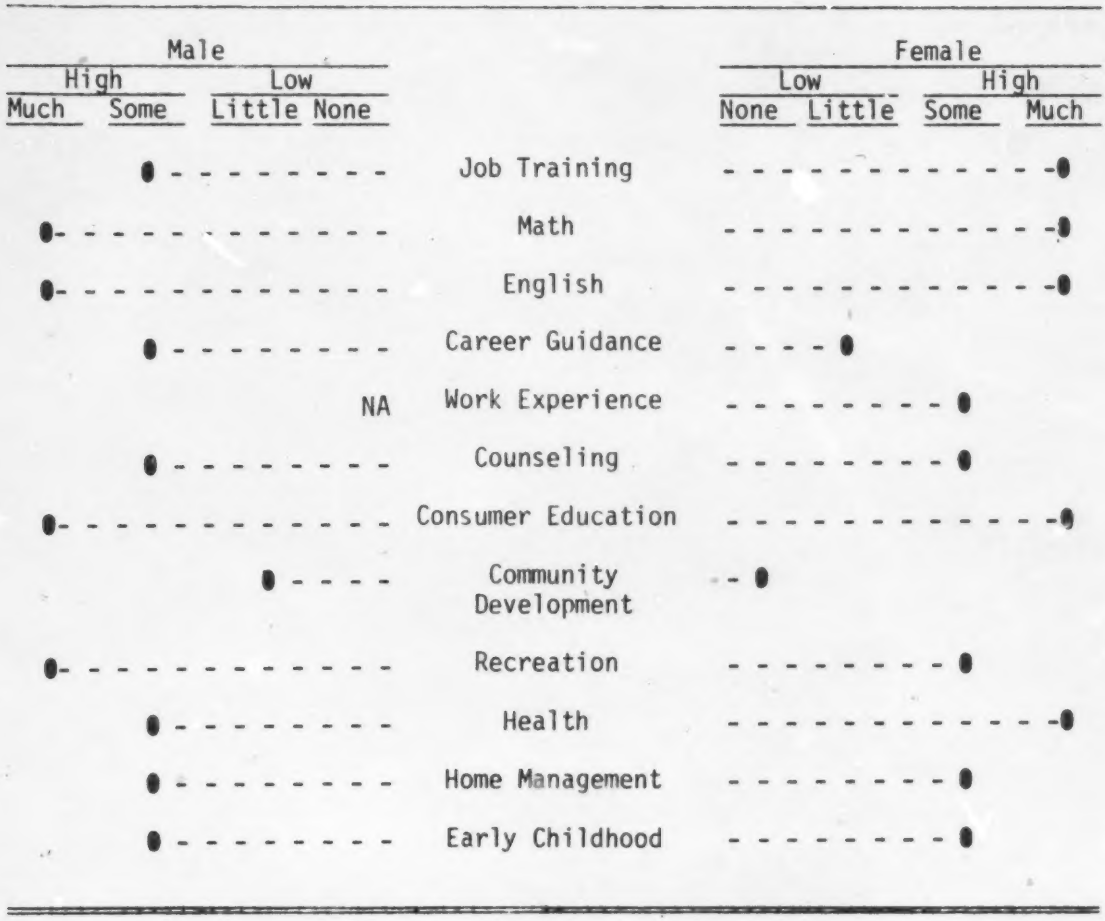

FIGURE 5

UTILITY RATING OF MOUNTAIN-PLAINS PROGRAM ELEMENTS

TABLE 1

SELF RATING OF PERSONAL AND WORK TRAIT CHANGES

Male		Female	
Improved	Regressed	Improved	Regressed
Self-Confidence		Punctuality	
Self-Knowledge		Self-Confidence	
Competance		Competance	
Industriousness		Industriousness	
Courtesy		Accuracy	
		Ambition	

TABLE 2

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. "Rate Mountain-Plains as an influence in your life."

	Very Positive	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Very Negative
Male		o			
Female		x			

2. "Knowing what you know now, would you have chosen Mountain-Plains?"

	Definitely Yes	Probably Yes	Don't Know	Probably No	Definitely No
Male	o				
Female	x				

3. "What is your rating for your current life in general?"

	Completely Satisfied	Well Satisfied	Neither Extreme	A Little Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Male				o	
Female				x	

4. "Rate your success:

		Completely Successful 9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Completely Unsuccessful 0
The year before M-P."	Male					o					
	Female						x				
Now."	Male			o							
	Female				x						
Five years from now."	Male	o									
	Female	x									